ELIZA
BISHOP
SOCIETY

S.S.L. No. 107

MEMOIR

OF

MISS ELIZA BISHOP.

FRONTISPIECE.

MEMOIR

OF

MISS ELIZA BISHOP.

By EMERSON DAVIS,
PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WESTFIELD.

Go to thy grave, in all thy glorious prime,—
In full activity of zeal and power;
A Christian cannot die before his time,—
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour.
MONTGOMERY.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

Birth—Education—Conversion—Teaching.

Eliza Bishop was born at Farmington, Ct., Dec. 9th, 1813. She was the second daughter of Uri P. and Levia Bishop. Mr. Bishop died in March, 1816, aged 36. A few years previous to his death, he became hopefully pious; though he never made a public profession of his faith in Christ.

Mrs. Bishop died in January, 1819, aged 37. She made a profession of religion soon after the death of Mr. Bishop, and consecrated her two daughters to God in baptism; but lived only long enough to commence the great work of training them up

in the way they should go. Her end was not only peaceful, but triumphant.

Eliza was two years and three months old when her father died, and five years and one month when her mother died. She and her sister two years older, were all that now remained of that once happy family. God's ways are mysterious, and past finding out; but he has encouraged believing parents to commit to his guardian care their orphan children; and often he enables them to say, in the language of faith and submission,

"If orphans they are left behind,
Thy guardian care we'll trust;
That care shall heal our bleeding hearts,
If weeping o'er their dust."

Eliza was committed to the care of a paternal uncle, and the elder sister to that of a maternal uncle; each with a patrimony more than sufficient to defray the expenses of her education.

Eliza continued to reside with her uncle in Farmington, until she was 18 years of age. Nothing is known respecting her

early education, or the progressive development of her intellectual and moral powers. Her advantages for learning, while she resided in Farmington, were chiefly such as the common school afforded; she attended a private academy six months. Her temper in childhood was peculiarly mild and placid; she was more inclined to indulge in grief than in anger. Whenever she thought herself injured, it was more consonant to her feelings to flee like the timid hare from an assailant, than lion-like to contend for victory.

At the age of 16, she became hopefully pious. Being timid and reserved, she kept her feelings, for the most part, to herself. It was perceived, however, by her friends, that she was unusually serious, and much inclined to be alone. It was some months before her feelings were known, and before she was regarded as a Christian. In consequence of being left without proper counsel and instruction, at the commencement of her spiritual life, she passed under a cloud, and was deprived of much enjoyment. After a few months, she disclosed

her feelings to a sympathizing relative, who discerned the buddings of piety, gave her such instruction as she needed, and encouraged her to be faithful in the service of her Saviour.

A few weeks previous to her death, she recorded in a private journal some recollections of her childhood, which may appropriately be introduced here:

"Holy Father, I am indebted to thee for my birth and education in a Christian land. From my earliest infancy, thou didst place me in circumstances to hear daily instruction, and the voice of prayer. A pious mother first taught my lips to utter the infant's prayer. She took me with her to her closet, to call upon thy name, that thou wouldst bless me. In thy mysterious providence, thou didst call that mother to follow my father to the world of spirits, and thou didst leave me an orphan child. In this dispensation I acknowledge thy overruling hand, and can *now* say (though I could not always), 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' 'Goodness and

mercy have followed me all the days of my life.' Friends have been gathered thick around me, and I have been provided with every comfort."

She began now to feel an ardent desire to qualify herself for as wide a sphere of usefulness as possible. Under the influence of this desire, in the autumn of 1831 she became a member of Westfield Academy, of which the writer was then the principal. She appeared very frail and delicate. She was mild and unassuming in her manners, anxious to improve her time, obedient to her teachers, and cheerful and happy in her daily labors.

In May, 1832, she united with the Congregational church in Westfield, and from that time took a more lively interest in every thing pertaining to the prosperity of Christ's kingdom. A few days before she made a public profession, she wrote to a cousin thus:

"Will you believe me, when I tell you that, if no unforeseen occurrence prevent, I

shall unite myself with the people of God next Sabbath, and shall publicly renounce the ways of sin, become a follower of Christ, and, I hope, through grace, a laborer in the vineyard? I could not have believed that a decision to perform this duty would make such a difference in my feelings. I have felt, ever since I gave in my name, a sweet enjoyment. It is truly a solemn transaction, and I have many fears lest I may be satisfied with a mere outward ceremony."

The winter of 1832–3 she spent with her friends in Farmington and its vicinity. She then spent about six months with an uncle in Brooklyn, Ct., where she attended a select school. From Brooklyn she went to Bristol, and spent six months in the study of Greek with a private teacher. While at Bristol, she was invited to take charge of the female department in Worthington Academy, in Berlin, Ct. This was a station for which she had been laboring assiduously to qualify herself. She entered upon the discharge of her new

duties with diffidence, and yet with a heartfelt delight.

Miss Bishop had many traits of character that rendered her services as a teacher very acceptable. She was patient, and willing to repeat an illustration, and able to simplify, if necessary, until the dullest scholar could comprehend it. The law of kindness was upon her tongue; she was tender of the feelings of her pupils, even though they were slow to comprehend her instructions. She considered them as learners, and remembered that what was hard for them to understand was once difficult to herself. She had so much sympathy for her scholars, that she almost identified her own interest with theirs, and manifested a tender solicitude, not only for their intellectual, but for their moral improvement. In her teaching she had respect to their *whole* existence,—the present and the future life. Regarding the enlargement of the intellect as favorable to the improvement of the heart, she availed herself of every opportunity to direct their attention to the concerns of the soul.

She continued her connection with Worthington Academy until the close of September, 1834. Her success in this first attempt at teaching may be inferred from the following unsolicited testimonial:

"At a meeting of the Trustees of Worthington Academy, holden on the 26th of September, 1834,

"*Voted*, That, having learned that Miss E. Bishop has resigned the care of the female department in the Academy, the Trustees take occasion to express their regret that she deems it her duty to retire from a station which she has uniformly filled with the highest credit to herself, and to the universal acceptance and satisfaction of the community. They tender to her their thanks for the interest she has taken in the Academy, and for the assistance she has rendered, by which the institution has attained to so desirable a celebrity. They indulge the hope that even a wider field of usefulness may open before her, and that the smiles of a beneficent Providence may ever attend her.

(Signed,) C—— A. G——."

After leaving Berlin, Miss Bishop spent a year at Philadelphia, in the capacity of assistant teacher in a female seminary. The school consisted of about sixty young ladies, the majority of whom were from wealthy families in the city, and the remainder were the daughters of rich men who resided in Baltimore, New Orleans, Natchez, and other southern cities. Miss Bishop's department of instruction was arithmetic, geography and Latin. She was, on many accounts, very well pleased with her situation in this school. She ever spoke of the principals of the seminary, and of the family in which she resided, in terms the most affectionate; but she was not pleased with the occupation of teaching those who had been cradled in wealth, and whose parents seemed to put a higher estimate upon a *fashionable* than upon a *useful* education. She felt that too much prominence was given to the things of time. She longed for a place where more attention should be paid to the severer sciences,—where ornamental branches and polite accomplishments would not prevent

a proper regard to the subject of religion, nor shut eternity from the view of her pupils.

The following extract of a letter, dated Feb., 1835, expresses her feelings on this subject:

"What I most regret, is the deficiency of religious instruction, and the difficulties that lie in the way of imparting it. There are two Catholics among our boarders; and though there is no objection to teaching them, yet no liberty is given to interfere with their principles. They must be indulged, must be allowed to fast Fridays, &c. * * * It seems that only wealth and influence are necessary, and that error may be tolerated to any degree. My Bible does not teach this, and I am utterly at a loss to know how such things are reconciled in the minds of others. * * * A little labor, in almost any other place, will accomplish what it requires much to do here. I was not made to flutter away my life, and I feel guilty every day. I am in a good place to learn many things that will

be very useful. I can learn something respecting human nature, something respecting the dangers of wealth and rank, as well as *their folly*. I can say with you, Give me an humble place—a place where I may live for the good of others—where I may exert all my influence to some valuable purpose—where I may glorify my Saviour in all my exertions, and spiritually benefit those with whom I am connected."

Miss Bishop continued at Philadelphia until the close of the academic year. She then went to Falmouth, to visit her sister, who had just married a very respectable merchant in that place.

It was the earnest desire of her employers at Philadelphia, that she should return to the academy. But though she was attached to those who superintended the school, and valued highly the religious privileges she enjoyed in the city, yet she could not consent to spend her time, where she could do so little to promote the spiritual interests of the young.

She remained in Falmouth until the beginning of October, and her friends were very desirous that she should continue with them. There was no necessity for engaging in the arduous labor of teaching; she had enough of this world's goods to supply her temporal wants. But neither the entreaties of friends, nor the circumstance that her constitution was frail, could induce her to remain in a situation where she had little opportunity to labor directly for the salvation of souls.

CHAPTER II.

A year in Providence—Labors—Tract distribution—Prayer meeting—Ill health—Returns to Falmouth—Westfield.

Miss Bishop, previous to going to Philadelphia, had contemplated opening a school at Providence. She had become much interested in the place, and thought it afforded just such a field of labor as she desired. In September, 1835, she visited that city, for the purpose of making some arrangements for a school. She received an offer from the principal of the Ladies Institute, which she accepted, and entered upon her labors in the month of October. Se had previously become acquainted with the Rev. T. T. Waterman, then pastor of the Richmond St. Church, in that city, and she now found a home in his family. In a letter to a cousin, written soon after commencing her labors in P., she says,

"I have been highly favored in finding a home in the family of which you have heard me speak, and in being connected with a school in every respect such as I could wish. I tremble when I think how surpassingly kind my heavenly Father is, and ever has been to me, and how ungrateful I am for mercies received.

"We have between 20 and 30 young ladies. There have been among them two cases of conversion since I came, and at times there is much solemnity. We hold a weekly prayer meeting, which is very interesting; a number who are not pious attend, and I hope the result may be what we desire."

The above extract shows that she had now found a place, more congenial with her desires to promote the kingdom of Christ. The following extract from a letter, written about this time, will show her views of duty:

"I feel that I have no right to consult my own happiness, when it comes in col-

lision with duty. My labors here are great and important; and O, that I could add, they are faithfully performed.

"It is an amazingly solemn thing to live in this world. Our individual influence is immense; eternity alone can estimate the results of one day's living. We are leaving impressions that will affect generations yet unborn. A word, perhaps, produces a change in the character of another, and that produces changes in others, which go on, increasing and extending while eternal ages roll forward. And what an interesting thought, that, if active Christians, we are co-workers with God. How astonishing, that he should permit us to labor for him!"

The following extracts, from a letter dated April, 1836, will show that she sacrificed pleasure to duty, and endeavored to work while the day lasted. She was engaged in the Institute six hours daily, in addition to the time spent at home in the preparation of lessons.

"I am endeavoring to live for the glory

of God; but I come far, very far short. When I would be governed by right motives, I find self, self does and will claim the first attention. O, this self seeking!

"My duties are many, and occupy me constantly. A tract district of thirty families interests me much. It requires grace, I assure you, to be a tract distributor. Our monthly prayer meeting for the cause, also, greatly interests me.

"Saturday P. M., we have a prayer meeting for the young female members of our church. About twenty belong to the circle; and they have thrown the responsibility of conducting it upon me. It has tried me much, as I am about the youngest, and altogether the most unfit for the place; but I could not consistently refuse. I am also privileged with a class in the Sabbath school, in which there are two married ladies. I sometimes feel as if I should sink under my labors; and I should, did not God support me, I am so weak and inefficient. I ought not to complain, for I have long been mourning because I had nothing to do in the service of Christ. He

has now given me a field, and I must labor according to my ability."

At the monthly prayer-meetings of the tract distributors, it was her practice to present a written report of her labors, in her own district. I will introduce a few extracts from these reports, because they not only show what she did, but throw some light upon the manner in which she labored, and so far may be of some use to other distributors.

"*June*, 1836.—Tract, *The Fool's Pence.* I find that a tract distributor needs much grace. In my distributions this month, I have been much perplexed with the suggestion, that effort for particular individuals or families will be of no avail. I have truly reason to be ashamed of my unbelief, for 'nothing is too hard for the Lord.' If distributors had more faith in the promises of God, and would go to their work, feeling an entire dependence upon divine strength, they would no doubt effect a mighty revolution in this city.

"In the first house I entered this month, I found the Fool's Pence needed. There was a sottish husband and father, who, though capable of supporting his family more than comfortably, deprives them of the necessaries of life. The wife succeeds in keeping two children at school, and seems to be an humble believer. In another family, I found an aged woman without any preparation for an exchange of worlds; and in another, a young lady who had been excommunicated from a church. She does not believe that any will perish; but she had no reason to offer in support of her belief, except the mercy of God. After earnestly pointing out to her her error, she said she did not know what her belief was."

In January, 1837, she presented her last report:

"I have once more attempted to perform the duty of a tract distributor; but I feel, as I always do, that I have been unfaithful. I lament that I have no more grace in exercise, though I know it is my own fault.

When we are brought into a situation where grace is needed, we become particularly sensible of our deficiency. A tract distributor is brought into such circumstances, once a month at least, and it would seem that it would induce one to live near to God. Is it always the case?

"In April last, I commenced the tract distribution. I have been permitted, by the mercy of God, to visit my district every month. It has been, to me, an inestimable privilege; and I have questioned, whether it were not my duty to continue here a few months longer, to labor in this cause and in the Sabbath school. But God directs, and I must leave. For the last time, I have dropped a tract in every house in my district, excepting one. O, that with it, I had dropped more words of precious truth! Would not Christ have done it? Would not almost any other disciple have done it? Let me say to you, dear fellow-laborers, if ever you leave your districts, it will be with a deep sense of past unfaithfulness. I trust you will never leave them of your own choice; for your

visits are a means of personal growth in grace you cannot too highly prize. Do you shrink from responsibility? I have done so; but have invariably found that it was for want of confidence in God. He works often by the feeblest means, and what we need is, to distrust ourselves entirely, and make him all in all in our hearts. Then, and then only, are we blessed. There is a great work to be done in this city, and the tract visiter has no small share of it to do. Prayer, united with an untiring effort on the part of those interested in the tract cause, will produce an important change. There is much to do in the district I leave. Some hearts are tender, and they need prayer and counsel. One who has felt much anxiety, has been listening to the instructions of a teacher of universal salvation, and appears satisfied. She heard attentively, however, while I endeavored to point out her error. Her case affected me deeply. There are many others in the district, that need instruction. Some are going rapidly the down hill of life, and two, who are apparently near the

foot of it, seem to be hardened in sin. I hope this district may fall into the hands of one, who can feel, and pray, and labor for souls. May the blessing of God attend that distributor!

"The tract concert I have attended, whenever it was possible, and believe it has been a profitable meeting to my soul. I do feel it to be the duty of each one, to help sustain this meeting. Written reports are indispensable. It is not the duty of one member only to write, but of all. I felt this, and have not failed in any month to write something, except the first. No visiter, who is faithful, will fail to find something interesting to communicate.

"And now, dear fellow-laborers, adieu. Relying upon divine aid, may you go forward, increasing in faithfulness, and consequently in holiness."

It is not my object to write a eulogy on the deceased Miss Bishop. My belief is, that she was a true disciple of Christ, and that she imbibed much of the spirit of her Lord; and I would hold up her life, not

only to exhibit the evidence of her discipleship, but to encourage others, and especially young ladies, to devote themselves more entirely to the service of the Saviour. My object will be best accomplished, by presenting what she wrote herself, without even a distant expectation that it would meet the public eye.

When unable to be present at the female prayer meetings of the Young Ladies' Institute, she usually wrote a note, in which she exhibited her earnest desire for the salvation of sinners. The following, selected from these notes, contains a fair specimen of the ardor of her soul:

"Dear sisters in Christ.—I have been thinking this morning, of the peculiar allotments of Providence. What will be your different situations and circumstances in future? Now, we think little of change, but it will come. O, how soon! Seas and continents may one day separate us from each other, but they cannot prevent Christian sympathy and communion. How sweet this sympathy!

"'Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.'

"And O, that all those dear youths were interested with us in these bonds. If we were all living for Christ, seeking to do his will, how delightful would be our situation and prospects. Why is it not so? Let us go to him, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, and importune still more earnestly for his presence. He may yet be gracious.

"I hope you will persuade some to attend the meeting on Friday, and may it be a precious season. I shall feel that it is a consecrated hour. Perhaps E., C., K. and S. will attend. It is my prayer, dear sisters, that we may realize more the worth of souls; at what an expense is their redemption purchased! If this redemption cannot be secured, what can compensate for the loss? 'He that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death.' Would we be the instruments of doing this, our own hearts must be revived. It is *grace*, yes, *grace* that we

need, to make us feel. We can obtain it at the cross, and no where else; and is it not worth asking for? is it not worth the striving to obtain? Remember me, dear sisters, in your prayers."

Again:

"It is a solemn consideration, my dear girls, that our every day's influence will be felt in eternity. Every impression we make will live. O, that we could feel our relation to another world!

"Let us follow one immortal soul to the regions of eternal despair, and perhaps we may hear ourselves accused by that soul of unfaithfulness. Perhaps our indifference was the means of fixing its destiny. After imagining something of the worm that never dies, let us consider, that it is distinguishing, unmerited grace that will save us, if saved at all, from such a doom. What, if not this, can move our hearts?

"I feel that we are too insensible to our obligations; that we are forgetting our Father's loving-kindness, and acting against rather than for him. We are doing this,

by throwing our influence on the side of the world. We see this, in the unconcern of those who love not the Saviour. Were we living for God, our companions would know it, yes, they would feel it. Shall we be the means of ruining a soul by our neglect?

"I manifest very little concern myself; I feel that I have wandered from God, and that I deserve the hidings of his face. But I have desired, and do still desire, a revival in our school; and it depends upon us to say, whether we are willing to receive such a blessing. We must not feel that such an event will interrupt study; but suppose we knew it would: should we harden our hearts, and say to God, Depart from us? Are we sure of our own interest in the love of Christ? Will you not, my dear girls, endeavor to humble yourselves before God? I need to do it, and, by his grace assisting me, I will come to the cross, and pray for a heart to feel and to act. Perhaps I am judging your feelings by my own; if so, forgive. I hope none of you are so unfaithful as I am; but you cannot

approach too near to God. He is faithful to his promises, and if we plead them in faith, we shall be heard.

"Accept these lines in affection.

"E. B."

Again:

"My dear friends, I cannot longer refrain from making known to you the feelings of my heart, and urging you to the performance of your Christian duties. Your teachers have been watching and longing with the most intense interest, for a revival in the Institution. It has seemed to me, that God was endeavoring in every possible way, to force himself upon our notice. He is now holding out to us the promise of a great blessing, if we will prepare ourselves to receive it.

"My dear friends, I wish to make a solemn appeal to your consciences, and at the same time to apply it to my own. I do not think you will ever receive more solemn or pointed instruction than you have for two weeks past. What effect has this instruction produced? Has it

driven you to the closet, there to humble yourselves, and to exercise that godly sorrow for sin that worketh repentance unto life: and there to pour out your souls in agonizing prayer, for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit? Have you in secret wept, in view of the condition of impenitent sinners? Have you conversed with them, from day to day, urging them to come to Christ? Have you communed with each other: and thus shown your anxiety for the revival of God's work? These duties are connected with the promotion of Christ's cause, and if other duties have taken their place, the inference is, that your hearts are not right, and therefore the blessing tarries.

"I am aware that your seasons of social intercourse have, of late, been more frequent than usual; and it is perfectly proper that you should enjoy such seasons. But have you so *improved* them, that your spirituality has been increased, that you have felt more relish for closet duties, and more union of interest for the promotion of a revival? If so, they have indeed been profitable seasons.

"I would not *force* you to feel an interest in the cause of Christ. I would not deprive you of any rational enjoyment; but I appeal to you as the friends of Jesus, and therefore of his cause, ought you not, at such a season as the present, to make any and every sacrifice, rather than suffer the Spirit of the infinite God to be grieved away? Ought you not to strive rather to please God than to please your friends? Is it right, think you, to consume your time in conversing together upon the veriest trifles, while souls are in a state of indecision in regard to improving the present opportunity? There are some among us who are kept by our influence, perhaps, from consecrating themselves to the Saviour. There has been a struggle in many breasts, the past week: and shall our inconsistency be the means of their sinking back into a state of lethargy?

"My dear friends, just weigh the value of an immortal soul, and say, shall any worldly interest come in competition with its salvation? Let us, dear youths, enter our closets, and there examine and search

our hearts, and pray until we feel willing to take up our cross and follow Christ. It will be death to some souls, I fear, if God leaves us.

"'Stay, thou insulted Spirit—stay.'

I will plead thy promises, for he is faithful who has promised. Will *you* go unitedly to the mercy seat, and there pour out your burdened, anxious souls? The Lord bless you and humble you, is the prayer of your ever affectionate, E. B."

In January, 1837, Miss Bishop's health was poor; and her friends, perceiving that she was sinking under the weight of her labors, persuaded her to leave her school and return to Falmouth.

It was a severe trial to leave a field of labor in which she was so successful, and to refrain from active service. But her health gradually improved, so that she was able during the summer to assist in a Sabbath school, in a remote part of Falmouth.

The pastor of the Congregational church in Falmouth, thus writes respecting her labors, while she remained with her friends:

"Miss B. was a deeply interested attendant on a Bible class, conducted with reference to the young members of the church. Her influence was of the best kind, in sustaining the meetings and encouraging the attendance of others. By her special exertions, a Sabbath school was organized in a very remote district of the parish. There was every thing unpropitious and discouraging in the commencement of this enterprise. But her zeal and care overcame every obstacle. Her constant presence, though the school was six miles from her residence, gave to it great animation and interest. She visited the parents of the scholars, and each of the children, and pressed upon them their respective obligations, with devoted energy and fidelity. The hopeful conversion of one of the most intelligent and useful females of that district, is among the happy fruits of her pious enterprise there. Happy must that pastor be, who is encouraged and aided by youthful disciples of so lovely a Christian spirit, and of such uniform and devoted consecration to every work of faith

and labor of love. May the Infinite Spirit multiply them a thousand fold."

In the autumn, her health was so much improved, that she became very desirous of entering again some wider field of usefulness, than presented itself in Falmouth. and hence, accepted an invitation to take charge of the female department of Westfield Academy; and in December entered upon her labors. She was much beloved as a teacher, and highly esteemed by all who knew her, for her consistent life and her truly Christian deportment.

She labored earnestly for the conversion of her pupils, and all others over whom she had any influence, or with whom she had any intercourse. Her mode of addressing youths upon the subject of religion was very plain and pointed, but at the same time so dignified and affectionate, that she won the confidence and love of those whom she addressed.

Some incidents and results of her labors in Westfield, will be noticed in another place.

CHAPTER III.

Journals—Extracts from Miss Bishop's private journal.

A PRIVATE journal, if kept with the most distant prospect of being made public, is of comparatively little value in regard to the evidence it affords of Christian character. It is human nature to desire to appear well before the public; and the temptation for a good man to represent himself in the most favorable light, in a journal that he expects will meet others' eyes, is very strong. And there is great reason to fear, that those who write such journals, do unintentionally give a coloring to their feelings and views, which would not be given, if they knew that no individual would ever read them.

By these remarks, I do not say that all the diaries and journals, kept by pious men and women, are to be regarded as utterly unworthy of credit. I only say, that when

we have reason to believe they are written with the hope or expectation that they will be published, they are partial testimony, and must be received with caution. There are, however, many journals that are kept by individuals without any expectation that they will be read by others. They are written as helps to self-examination. Many persons can fix their thoughts upon themselves, and commune more carefully with their own hearts, if they write down their reflections and meditations. These exercises in self-examination may be of use to the individual on other similar occasions. A private journal kept for this purpose, is viewed by the writer as a kind of scaffolding to a building. He uses it while carrying up the spiritual temple; but when his work is done, it is considered as fit only for the flames.

Miss Bishop kept a private journal during the last three years of her life. She began it in January, 1836. She never expected it would meet the public eye. She gave directions, when she found that death was drawing near, to have it burned;

but she was advised to let it be preserved for her sister.

Some portions of this journal will now be made public, for the purpose of showing her habit of self-examination. I feel justified in doing contrary to the wishes of the deceased, in this particular, because I feel assured that, could she now be asked, she would give her consent, provided there was reason to believe it would, in any degree, promote the interests of vital piety.

The journal was written as an exercise in self-examination, and not as a history of her feelings. This is apparent from the style in which it is written, and from the fact that it was a periodical exercise, performed almost every Saturday evening.

I introduce a few extracts, merely to show her habit of communing with her own heart. I have deemed it most suitable to present them in one chapter, rather than intersperse them in chronological order through the Memoir.

The journal commences thus:

"January 16th, 1836.

"THOUGHTS AND RESOLUTIONS.

"As a professed follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, I this day feel it to be my duty to examine myself and renew my covenant. If I have never unreservedly consecrated myself to Christ, resolving to live for his glory alone, this shall be the day on which I engage, with my whole heart, to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. I have no reason to doubt the willingness of God to give me strength. All I have to distrust, is my own deceitful heart; but I give that away, and with solemn earnestness resolve:

"1. To dedicate all my influence, my talents and my possessions to Christ my Saviour.

"2. I will make all the acquirements possible, with a view to his glory.

"3. I will improve every opportunity for doing and getting good.

"4. Feeling my entire dependence on Christ, I will often, in my closet, supplicate the throne of mercy.

"5. I will not engage in the follies or fashions of the world.

"6. I will endeavor to be faithful in my correspondence.

"7. I will ask the blessing of God on all my undertakings, and be resigned to all his dispensations.

"8. I will strive against every prejudice.

"9. I will watch over my temper.

"These engagements I solemnly make, in the strength of God, beseeching him for grace to keep me firm, faithful, watchful even unto the end.

"These shall be reviewed every Saturday or Sabbath evening."

An extract from a letter, written to a friend the day after these resolutions were drawn up, will show the temper of mind she then had, and throw some light upon the object of these resolutions and of the journal to which they are prefixed:

"We must daily grow in grace; in every possible way we must glorify our Saviour,

or we have no evidence of belonging to him. I never before had such views of the Christian's duty, and of the claims and character of the blessed God, as I now have. And in his strength I have recorded some resolutions, which I am resolved shall lie before me, be reviewed, and kept (by the aid of the Holy Spirit), so long as I live; yes, *so long as I live.* I have trembled under them, and prayed over them, and have committed all to God. Without his grace, I know I am not secure a moment."

It is evident that Miss Bishop's journal was designed simply as a record of the results of her stated seasons of self-examination; it is also evident, that she designed to embody in the resolutions some general principles of duty, gathered from the divine word, to be used as a kind of touch-stone, by which to test the state of her heart.

And here, dear reader, permit me to ask, if you are in the practice of *self-examination?* Do you sit in judgment upon yourself, for the purpose of ascertaining

whether you are an heir of God, or a child of the wicked one? Will it not be well for you to set apart "every Saturday or Sabbath evening," to inquire whether you are walking in the way to heaven, or in the way to hell?

"January 30th, 1836.

"'Dear Jesus! let thy pitying eye
Call back a wandering sheep;
False to my vows, like Peter, I
Would fain, like Peter, weep.'

"Confession truly becomes one so guilty as I have been. How do these broken vows bear testimony to my unfaithfulness! I have been comparatively indolent in my Master's service, and have been selfish in my efforts. I have regarded iniquity in my heart,—have hurried my secret devotions,—have neglected opportunities for doing good, and have not profited as much as I ought, by the valuable instructions I have received. I have not felt impressed with the truth, 'Thou, God, seest me,' nor have I restrained, as I should, the risings of impatience, nor cherished feelings of

dependence, humility and contrition. * * * * * Pride and self-love are manifest in every form. How hard to root them out! Yet they must be overcome. Dear Saviour, I have no hope but in thine abounding mercy. O, that mercy—so rich, so free! I rely upon it; let it be magnified in pardoning and saving the vilest rebel."

"*Feb. 27th.*—I am preserved another week, no doubt for wise purposes. It has been a varied week, and in some respects interesting. But I find too much of my time is given to watching the exercises of my own mind. I mourn over my neglect of duty, when I should be making reparation by increased effort. While contemplating the self-denial and sufferings of Henry Martyn, I have been overwhelmed with shame in view of my sluggishness. Sometimes I feel an earnest desire to labor for Christ, but when an opportunity presents itself for doing good, I cowardly shrink back. In all my aims, self stands before me, and demands the first

regard. O, this self-seeking, this pride that brooks not the least mortification! It follows me wherever I go, and abides wherever I rest. Is it unconquerable? I believe I shall be obliged to refuse an active part in our female prayer meetings, for if I attempt to pray, I forget that I am pleading with God, in my anxiety to appear well before others; regarding the opinions of a fellow-worm rather than the opinions of an infinite God. How abhorrent must such conduct appear in his view. How wonderful that my soul is not in hell. Truly, he is long-suffering, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

"*July* 10*th.*—I do long for more holiness, for more of the spirit of Christ. It seems as if all my prayers had been mockery, and all my services hypocrisy. I see more and more corruption, but instead of subduing, I yield to it. Is there any love in my heart?

"Circumstances, the last week, have led me to think more of the duty of unreserved consecration to Christ. I have

prayed for submission to the will of God, and for preparation for whatever he shall order in future life. I may be called to take up my residence in a heathen land; to whatever Providence orders, I would cheerfully submit. I sometimes feel that one circumstance would make it less a sacrifice for me to become a missionary, than for most others; and perhaps that may make it a duty. I have no parents, and few friends, if any, that need my stay here. My dear sister surely would be tried; but this one prayer I offer: 'O Father, reconcile me to all thy will.'"

"*Sept. 4th.*—Another holy Sabbath is drawing to a close; and what important messages will it bear to heaven from different parts of the world? How much truth has been proclaimed! Some to be received into good and honest hearts, while much has fallen by the way-side and among thorns, or where there is no depth of earth.

"I have been allowed the privilege of going again to the sacramental table, and

think it has been, in some measure, a precious season to my soul. Heard a sermon, in the morning, from these words: 'If ye love me, keep my commandments;' and in the afternoon, from these: 'Bring no more vain oblations.'

"I have felt some meltings of soul, to-day, and desires for renewed consecration and engagedness in the cause of Christ. Yes, I am his, and I will pray for sanctifying grace, for holiness of heart, and a disposition to make any sacrifice that shall be for the glory of God."

When Miss Bishop left Providence, in January, 1837, she made the following record of her feelings:

"I hope I feel a perfect acquiescence in the will of God. Nothing happens without his providence, and I desire to rely wholly on his guidance. He has guided me hitherto, and will still be my God. May I glorify him in all my ways. Let his will be done."

She made but few entries in her journal during the year 1837; though she continued to review her resolutions every week. The following is the last record of her feelings while at Falmouth:

"*Sabbath evening*, *July* 16*th*.—The blessed light of another Sabbath is just receding, and I am permitted, in the solitude of my chamber, to enjoy the rapidly departing moments. How many, and especially missionaries in heathen lands, are disturbed in their devotions, if not entirely prevented from enjoying seasons of retirement, by the constant bustle of those around them. O, what would they give for an hour of peace and quiet communion with God! And yet they find more enjoyment, deprived of the privileges of Christian intercourse, than I do with my thousand exalted means. O, how must my Father in heaven regard a heart so indifferent and sluggish as mine. Am I concerned about it? Were it not that I have so often renewed my *resolutions*, and engaged before God to live for his glory,

I should feel that my present determination 'to put on Christ' would avail; but I cannot trust myself a moment. I can only pray God to give me grace, a conscience alive to sin, and the power of his quickening Spirit.

"My influence, through the blessing of God, may save many souls. Has it saved any? The Lord humble me. I would it might be by any means; I will pray for humility, for deep abasement, and for a heart disposed to deny self and to labor for Christ."

"*Westfield, January 7th*, 1838.—I have ended the first Sabbath of the new year. Its scenes have been solemn, and I trust will not soon be forgotten. Nearly six years ago, in this place, I stood before the altar and publicly dedicated myself to God. To-day I have sat at the same communion table, and have been enabled in a faint degree, to renew the consecration.

"In returning to this place, I am impressively reminded of past events. Here

I first publicly dedicated myself to God, and had my name enrolled among his professed disciples. Here I commenced an acquaintance with some whose remains are slumbering in the dust.

"I have returned here to take upon me the responsibilities of a teacher. Our term has commenced, and about forty immortal souls are placed under my immediate influence. Who is sufficient for these things? My frail body trembles beneath the weight of so much care and effort. How long it will endure, I know not; but O, for a heart willing to leave this and every thing else to him who is my rightful disposer."

The following extract breathes the pious emotions of her soul, and is just such a prayer as I should have expected she would offer when alone with God. It is fervent, and full of filial love:

"*Feb. 9th.*—I am led to inquire what have I done, and what am I doing for Christ? Alas! has my influence been instrumental in leading back one soul to

God? I know not that it has. And am I a disciple? O! am I? Dearest Father, do I not love thee? O, pardon, for the sake of Jesus, thy unprofitable servant. I will be thine; I will renewedly yield this heart a willing sacrifice to thee; I have done it repeatedly, and soon have forgotten my vows. O, hold with thy powerful hand, and enable me to crucify the world with its affections and lusts; enable me to renounce my idols, abominable *self*, and to overcome every sin that easily besets me. O Lord, I stretch forth my hand to thee; vouchsafe thine aid. O, leave me not alone, not a moment alone! Do thou be my shepherd for ever, and my guide. Place me on any spot in this dark world, where I can most glorify thy name and advance thy cause. I cannot live with my heart divided between two masters. Dear, blessed Saviour, I commend myself to thy grace. Amen."

"*April 8th.*—I have professedly consecrated all to Christ; but there are sins to which I still cling, and which occasion me

daily anguish of spirit. My love of worldly distinction, my self-preference and pride, I still indulge, to the dishonor of Christ. Will I heartily relinquish all? Will I sincerely? O, stay, insulted Spirit; hear my confession and my vows. I have been base; I have been unbelieving; I have been hypocritical; but I come now, yes, Saviour, I come with tears, and engage to 'cut off my right hand, or pluck out my right eye' in duty to thee. O, how hast thou followed me with love! And wilt thou own me now? Thou dost smile and hold out thy sceptre still."

"*April* 16*th.*—If ever I reach the blessed mansion above, how loudly shall I be constrained to sing of sovereign grace and dying love."

"*May* 6*th.*—I am conscious of neglecting to pray specifically for the advancement of Christ's cause on earth. I am therefore resolved to remember: On Monday, the Missionary cause in general. On Tuesday, our National sins and Home Missions.

On Wednesday, Bible and Tract cause. On Thursday, The Seaman's Friend Society. On Friday, all my friends, and my own spiritual interest. On Saturday, Sabbath schools and institutions of learning. On the Sabbath, ministers, Sabbath-breakers and the efficacy of the truth."

"*July 29th.*—The past week, my dear friend, Mrs. C. A. Parish, yielded her spirit to God who gave it. She died, trusting in her Saviour, I saw her die, and O, the impression! I shall never lose it. I had no idea of the struggles of death. I trust it will make me feel more need of grace."

"*Oct. 7th.*—Two youths in our school have, within a few days, I trust, dedicated themselves sincerely to the service of Christ; others are serious, and we do hope, blessed Redeemer, that thou hast designs of mercy towards us."

"*Dec. 9th.*—I have, to-day, observed the anniversary of my birth. Twenty-four years of my life have glided away, and I

am permitted to record the sparing goodness and unmeasured mercy of my heavenly Parent."

"*Dec. 23d.*—I do ask for entire subjection to the will of Christ. I tremble lest I should at last be cast away. I am more and more suspicious of myself. I have more sense of the awful depravity of my heart. I know I love holiness more than sin. I would be made pure; be divested of every base passion and vile affection, and have the image of Jesus instamped on my heart."

"*Jan. 6th*, 1839.—The last year, month week and day of life will speedily come. How shall I then wish I had filled up these brief moments with duty! I must do more for the interests of Zion. I must divest myself of the cumbrous cares of this world, and let all my anxiety run in one channel. The world is a bubble; its pleasures and allurements are vanity and vexation of spirit."

The following extract was written after her health began to fail. She was confined to the house, though not to her room.

"*March* 3*d*.—Renewedly sought the mercy-seat, and found God a present, prayer-hearing God. I have the assurance that he pities my infirmities and weaknesses, and is ready to accept the least desire which is sincere. Without hope in Christ, I should be most miserable. This hope I cannot and will not relinquish; though it often trembles on account of the inconsistency of my conduct."

CHAPTER IV.

Letters to N——, to A——, to W——. Selections.

Miss Bishop, in her letters and journal, speaks often of her desire to save souls, and sometimes adds, "I know not that I have been the instrument of bringing one soul to Christ." It is known to her friends, that she labored much for the spiritual welfare of those around her, and especially for her pupils. And I propose to bring together in this chapter, some facts, to show the manner in which she labored, and that she labored not in vain.

One of her resolutions was, that she would be "faithful in her correspondence." She conversed with her pupils whenever favorable opportunities presented themselves; and she also sought occasions for leading them to consider their ways.

To those with whom she had not frequent opportunities for personal conversation, she was accustomed to write. Her letters were always pungent and affectionate.

The following note was written to a young man, then a pupil in Westfield Academy. She knew that he was anxious for the salvation of his soul, and she had conversed with him much, but she feared he would grieve the Spirit:

"Mr. N——: I believe you have, for some time, felt a degree of anxiety about your soul; but I fear you have not been led to humble yourself, and to repent at the foot of the cross. I fear you are yet undecided, whether to serve God or sin and the world. It is time a decision was made. The Holy Spirit has been knocking at the door of your heart, and urging your reconciliation to God, and a submission of your heart to the Saviour.

"You feel unhappy; and so you will always feel, while in a state of enmity with God. Never, until you yield that rebellious spirit, will you know peace.

And why do you wait? You know you are a sinner, guilty, unworthy and lost; that it is your duty to love your Creator, your benefactor, your best friend; that you are under obligations to him for ten thousand mercies; that it is your duty to give him the undivided affections of your heart; and that he is worthy of your love. You know that you have broken the commands of God, and that your case would have been desperate for ever, had it not been for the interference of Jesus Christ; and that through him you may be pardoned and saved. What more do you need to know? Just follow these thoughts through in your mind, and ask yourself if you ought not—if you *will not*—at once repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and become his servant. Why wait for more conviction? Do you not assent to these truths? Then come *this moment*, and say:

> "'Here, Lord, I give myself away;
> 'T is all that I can do.'

You must sooner or later come to Christ, if you would obtain salvation. Come *now*.

Begin to-night the service you ought to have commenced years ago. Lay not this paper down, I entreat you, until you have submitted to Christ. You will never be more inclined to do it. The Spirit urges you, and the Spirit longer resisted may take its final flight. Let me meet you to-morrow morning a Christian. Will you? Christ can change your heart. Yield it to him, and he will do it.

"Yours anxiously, E. B."

This note Miss Bishop followed with her earnest prayers, knowing that it would produce no good effects, unless accompanied by the Spirit of God; and the young man thinks it was the instrument that was blessed to his conversion.

The three following notes were written to a young man who was a member of the male department of Westfield Academy, while she was preceptress:

"Mr. A——: There are a number of youths in your department, upon whom I never fix my eyes without receiving

painful impressions. This arises from the consciousness of their exposure to the displeasure of God, and their unconcern in view of it. The conviction forces itself upon me, that some of you will probably persist in sin until the harvest is past and the summer is ended.

"My friend, think you that yours will be the doom of the unprofitable servant? Have you any conviction of duty? Have you not a restlessness of mind, some stings of conscience, that you wish to have removed? If not, your heart is very hard. But if you do experience such feelings, will you receive my testimony, when I tell you that religion, and that alone, can remove these anxieties?

"Perhaps you think you desire the knowledge and love of God; but is it true? Do you long for any thing of a worldly nature, that lies within your reach, and not stretch forth your hand to take it? Do you believe what God says, that he that seeketh, findeth? No; your heart is averse to this subject, and you have not that sense of your lost condition

which induces you to abandon your vain excuses, and to fly to the city of refuge. You do not believe that you have no righteousness of your own, that you must be saved through the merits of Christ's righteousness, or perish. If you did believe this, you would sooner lie down and sleep beneath a tottering precipice, than remain one hour where you are.

"It is certainly time, my friend, for you to awake from this lethargy. However unpleasant the subject may be to your mind, you must *reflect.* You must come to the solemn determination, that you will fix your mind and keep it upon the subject, till you discern what your duty is. Are you unwilling to make an effort to secure the salvation of your soul? If so, this precious gem must be cast into unquenchable fire.

"'O, that you were wise, that you understood this, that you would consider your latter end.' Is not God worthy of your love? Do you find aught in his character which you disapprove? Be assured the fault lies in yourself. *You* must change, God cannot.

"Receive this, with the prayer of your friend, that the Lord will enlighten and save you. E. BISHOP."

The effect of this note upon the young man, may be learned from the following reply to his answer:

"I will most cheerfully and gladly endeavor to give you my views respecting the duty of an impenitent sinner. First, let me say, There is no doubt your heart is more callous, than it was during the season of conviction, to which you allude. How easily you might then have yielded to the claims of God. It is evident you have not, however, sinned away your day of grace, for then you would have no thought or anxiety on the subject of religion. The door of mercy is still open, and you may enter. Are you sincere in wishing to become a Christian? If so, there is no obstacle to prevent, except what exists in your own heart. Are you willing that this should be removed? If so, I will tell you what to do:

"Retire by yourself and reflect, not upon your own unhappy condition, but upon the character and love of God. Call to mind the thousand instances in which his goodness has passed before you. Think of the holiness and purity of his character. See if you can find in him any injustice or imperfection. Think, also, of his holy law and righteous government, and then inquire how you feel in view of your relations to such a Being. Do you love the holiness of God, or do you love sin? You will see yourself condemned by the law you have violated, and that you are justly condemned. View, then, the amazing work of redemption. Do you see no display of mercy or benevolence here? no condescension or compassion in this provision for the lost and hell-deserving sinner?

"When you see how disobedient you have been in every act of your life, and how directly opposed you have been to the will of God, can you hope for mercy in your own name, or on account of your own merits? No; your duty is plain;

you must go, guilty, wretched, lost and unworthy to the precious Lamb of God, and throw yourself upon his mercy.

> "'If you tarry till you're better,
> You will never come at all.'

All the fitness he requires, is that you feel your need of him. Submission is trusting Christ to save you. Yours is the act of faith; his, of pardon. Will you not, my friend, before you leave the place of retirement, of which I spoke, submit to Christ? One individual of our number returned from meeting a few evenings since, resolving to repent before he slept. I trust he did.

"Repentance is godly sorrow for sin. Can you not feel this in view of your sins and great ingratitude? You cannot avoid it, if you view yourself aright.

"Your friend, E. BISHOP."

Soon after receiving the above note, the young man, it is hoped, yielded himself a servant of Christ. He has since made a profession of religion, and is studying, preparatory for the ministry.

The following note from Miss Bishop, was written in answer to one communicating the tidings of his conversion:

"Dear Friend:—The tidings contained in your note were truly pleasant. They were such as I expected to hear; for I have felt a kind of assurance that you were about to enter the kingdom of God. You will not wonder that angels tune their harps when one sinner repenteth. You know something about the danger and wretchedness of a soul under the curse of God's law, and I trust you can praise that sovereign grace, that has plucked you as a brand from the burning. Is it not grace alone that has done it? Does it not overwhelm you with shame and contrition, when you think how long your heart has been barred against the Saviour? May you now manifest your gratitude, by an unreserved and unconditional surrender and consecration of yourself to his service. May you be a Bible Christian, a *whole* Christian. You will find your own heart

to be your worst enemy. You must resist its evil inclinations, resolutely and constantly. Therefore put on the whole Christian armor. Set your mark high. You may become a David Brainard, a Henry Martyn, or a James B. Taylor,—if you will begin and live as they did.

"You will sometimes be troubled with doubts. You will find relief by asking yourself what you doubt. 'Do I doubt God's holiness, justice, or goodness? Do I doubt whether his law is perfect; whether my sins are great, or that his mercy is pledged to the penitent, or that it is my duty to give myself and all to Christ?' Assured of these things, here take your stand, and let all your doubts be sacrificed on what you know.

"Observe stated seasons of prayer. If you would live a Christian life, you must frequent your closet. 'It is only while we pray we live.' Make Christ a confidential friend; fail not to open to him your heart, your whole heart, and tell him all your trials and perplexities. Settle the first principles, and then let it be your daily

inquiry, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?'

"The Christian life is one of warfare. Calvary is truly our hope. The Lord keep you, and may you be a faithful, active, humble, living and obedient disciple of Jesus.

"Yours affectionately, E. BISHOP."

It is unnecessary to enlarge this volume with a detailed account of all the cases of conversion, of which she was the honored instrument. Among her pupils at Providence and at Westfield, there are at least TWELVE, who, during two years and a half, are believed to have been convicted and converted in consequence of her faithfulness.

While she was a member of Westfield Academy, there boarded in the same family with her, a young man, who was the son of a deceased clergyman. He became hopefully pious, and ran well for a time; but after he entered college, he became intimate with a circle of impenitent, rude young men. He soon wandered from God,

and sank into a state of coldness; and it was feared by his friends, that, if he had not already done it, he would embrace some infidel scheme, and his last state be worse than the first.

Miss Bishop was shocked and grieved when she heard of his departure from the right way of the Lord. She addressed to him a very faithful letter, and continued to urge him to return to the way of life and peace, for about three years. He was finally brought to repentance, and is now in a theological seminary, fully determined, if God spares his life, to preach the gospel of Christ; and to build up the church in whose bosom he has lain, and on which he has inflicted a grievous wound.

The young gentleman has kindly allowed me to read the letters of Miss B., which were written to him while wandering from the fold of the Great Shepherd, and to insert in this memoir of our common friend, such extracts as I choose to select.

"Brooklyn, August 6th, 1833.

"FRIEND W——: It is with peculiar emotions that I take the liberty to address to you a few lines; and perhaps you will consider it almost an unpardonable deed. But stop; it is not so. I know your generous disposition too well to indulge such a thought. * * * * *

"I have this day received a letter from E. She gives me information which confirms what I have previously heard respecting you. And, W., is it so? Have you indeed renounced that hope, upon which you so confidently relied as the Saviour's gift, sufficient to secure you a passport from this world to heaven? O, is it so! Is all hope for ever fled!

"I received a letter from S. M., a few days since, which informed me that report said, 'W. was becoming unprincipled!' I could not, I did not believe it. But am I brought to the painful necessity? No; it is not so. If you have, as E. says, given up your hope, your own good judgment will not permit you to remain

in such a condition. I must reason with you.

"What first made you so sensible that you had no interest in Christ? Did you become weary of his service, and feel that it was sacrilege to perform your devotions, and therefore did you conclude you were insincere? Did you never feel the joys of an approving conscience, arising from a sweet reliance upon Christ? You knew there was no other way of salvation, and have you never abhorred yourself as an opposer of the will and proffered mercy of Jesus Christ?

"W., you are tempted. You have been led astray by the adversary of souls. You are too willing to believe you are an alien from God; and thus you strengthen the bonds by which Satan holds you. This is because you have suffered the love of the world to get too large a place in your heart; but it does not prove that you have not become truly interested in the Saviour.

"Do you think, because you have made so much effort to become a Christian, and have, as you suppose, failed, that you can

proceed no farther? Are you resolved to live in the way of the world, trusting to uncertainty? It is continued perseverance that God requires of the Christian. Of this you have become weary; so do many others. You have backslidden; so have I. But there is a possibility of returning. Your case is not hopeless. Can you continue idle? What are your prospects? You are preparing to become a minister of the gospel—am I mistaken? I have often heard you say you should study for no other purpose. You must relinquish this, if you do your hope. What will you do? How will your uncle bear to have his fondest hopes blasted, and to see his dearest earthly comfort become a reproach to the church of Christ? If you are fully persuaded that you never experienced a saving change, can you go to the table of the Lord? You would forgive my plainness, if you knew my feelings. But if I must forfeit your friendship by this appeal, *I must.* I feel tenderly concerned for you.

* * * * * *

"Admit that you have never had a

saving change in your feelings; you have only to come now and follow Christ, and you may yet be saved. O, try once more, and try effectually. Now I ask you affectionately, will you, when you have perused this, retire, and make up your mind to live or die eternally? Be resolved that you will do one or the other. * * *

"Pardon this intrusion. Think not that I reproach you, or that I consider myself better than you. I would be sensible of my own deficiency, and commit myself as well as you to the mercy of Christ. * *

"Yours, &c., E. BISHOP."

"Berlin, July 17th, 1834.

"FRIEND W——, * * It is impossible, after all the experience you have had, the variety of Christian feelings you have manifested, and the pleasure you have taken in Christian society, that you should have remained all the while insensible and blinded to your real situation. W——, you did have some enjoyment in religion. But stop, my belief will not alter yours. You are decidedly fixed in your opinions, and what good can I do? What can I

avail to change the current of your thoughts and feelings? I shall most likely increase your wretchedness, and probe the wound I would heal. Why, then, do I write? Only because I cannot, or will not, resist my inclinations. Has not God used the feeblest instruments to effect his purposes? and who can tell but he may make me the occasion of good, even to you? I hope I am influenced by proper motives; if not, O, may I be! May my prayers, polluted as they are, find acceptance and favor with him, who is more ready to hear than I am to ask! * * * * *

"I have ever thought your life would be devoted to the service of your Redeemer; that you would be made the humble instrument of good to many, should your life be spared to complete your collegiate course. You may first pass through fiery trials, but I believe you will at last come forth, purified, humbled, and made submissive to the will of God. * *

"Will you wilfully bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ? Will you crucify him afresh, by refusing to repent of your disobedience? Reason tells you what

you ought to do; but you give free indulgence to your inclinations, and therefore cannot act otherwise than you do. But you are commanded to consider your ways; and how can you, without reflection, be interested in any subject.

"You say, 'the way is clear, but I am so insensible that I care not whether I perish or am saved!' Here is the difficulty. Well, then, if you will not come, if you are determined to give yourself up to be conquered by the enemy of souls, hoping that *perhaps* God, by his mighty power, and in his own time, will awaken you,—if you settle down on such a hope, you are lost. Without effort, you never will be saved, and now is the most favorable time to make the effort. Will you not be persuaded to consult your eternal interest, to break from this dangerous thraldom, and to cast yourself, as a guilty, hell-deserving rebel, upon the mercy, the unbounded mercy, of the Saviour?

"'Mercy is all you have to plead,
Mercy, the only plea you need.'

"I am, as ever, your friend,

 "E. BISHOP."

"Bristol, Aug. 2d, 1835.

"It is even so; you have given yourself up to believe a lie, and have willingly deprived yourself of sanctuary privileges. What will the end of these things be? You know I have ever been interested in your welfare; I have looked upon you as set apart for the service of God, and have expected your life would be devoted to the Redeemer's cause. But, O, the change! You seem to be counteracting the designs of Providence, by throwing your influence upon the side of Satan. I no longer doubt your hypocrisy, for I cannot believe that a disciple of the Lord Jesus would thus long be left to dishonor his holy religion. You have acted a base part; but the fact that you are miserable inclines me to believe you are not for ever abandoned. Would that you believed it! True, your situation is critical; you have provoked the Saviour, and trespassed upon his forbearance, till there is little reason to hope; and the fear that *that* little glimmering of hope may soon be extinguished, gives me, if it does

not you, intense anxiety. I cannot look upon a friend in such a state, without peculiar emotion. Do you laugh? Do you feel disposed to trifle with my seriousness? * * * * *

"Let your friends be comforted with the assurance that you are using the means of grace. Take your Bible; search it. Be assured your reasons for indulging your present views are not well founded. You think you are assured; you are satisfied; but I know you are not. Is your conscience always easy? Does your mind never turn to the future, to your opposition of heart, &c.?

"Will you gratify me in one thing? It will do you no harm. I ask you to spend one half hour in reading your Bible, every day; not in reading merely, but in studying. Make yourself acquainted with the truth. If you cannot apply it, ask God's blessing upon the effort. Say not, it is blasphemy to approach him in prayer. Think me not harsh, because I am earnest. I make no excuse, for I am confident of your forbearance.

"Yale College has witnessed another revival. Many, who seemed the most hardened, have espoused the cause of Christ, and enlisted in his service, while there remains *one*, a professed disciple, and yet an idle, uninterested spectator. Your eyes saw, your ears heard, but your heart was unaffected. I thought of you, and inquired the first opportunity, expecting different news. Not on my own account was I disappointed; but the Saviour was injured, his call disregarded, his mercy abused, his goodness despised. The season of revival is past; but remember the Saviour remains the same. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him.' It is not God, but yourself, that hinders the blessing. * * * * * * Must you be separated by the impassable gulf from your dear departed father, and beloved friends, for ever and for ever? It remains for you to decide. Believe what I tell you, the door is not yet closed, and if you will enter, you will be welcome.

"You have my prayers, and those are all I can bestow. I have done; this letter will probably be my last. O, W——, beware! beware! If I have dealt harshly, forgive. It is a tender concern for you that prompts what I say.

"I remain, as ever, your friend,

"E. Bishop."

Providence, Feb. 24, 1836.

"Friend W——: I have been thinking this morning of the interests of the coming day, as it regards the institutions of learning in this country, and my mind has rested with peculiar solemnity upon Yale.

"Your letter was unexpected, though it gratified me to receive it. I felt that you had some conscience remaining. My dear friend, I must be plain with you, and I feel assured you will appreciate my motives, and forgive, if any thing is said amiss. I did not like the spirit of your letter. It did not breathe forth the language of our Saviour, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek,' &c. Read the sermon on the mount, and imbibe its precepts.

"It matters not what others think of us, if we are approved of God. It is this want of approval which makes you wretched. Deny not that you are so. You were, if not now. Who can be in Satan's power, and feel at all comfortable? You were in his power. You contemned the Saviour, broke away from your covenant, and trampled its blood under your feet.

"You 'have been particular,' you say, 'in the choice of companions.' And whom have you chosen? Are they those who love the Saviour, and seek to lead your wandering footsteps and wayward heart back to the cross? Are they those who can and do often kneel with you at the throne of mercy? Or are they those who, cloaking themselves under your profession, are far gone in the ways of sin, and have no fear of God before their eyes?

"If you live in this condition, no doubt yielding to temptation, you will become abandoned; and what will be your influence, compared with what it would have been, had you become a minister of the gospel? But I forbear. I cannot endure

the thought. Yes, W——, I am your friend—my plainness is sufficient proof. You are an orphan; you have no father's hand to guide you, and no mother's heart to cheer and commend a wayward youth to the dear Redeemer. I said I would not write again; but conscience has prevailed. I thought you might heed a word coming from me—that you might pause in your folly, and be led by the Spirit of God to decide what you will do.

"I entreat you to reflect for a moment upon your influence, your character, your destiny. Adieu, E. Bishop."

The answer to the above letter brought the joyful intelligence that W—— had returned from his wanderings, and was determined to serve the Lord. In reply to which she writes:

"Providence, June 4, 1836.

"Truly nothing is more gratifying to me, in reference to yourself, than to learn from your own pen that you are seeking, and are determined to seek in all you do,

the honor and glory of God. Negligent and indifferent as I may be, I do rejoice in every event which tends to promote the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom. How painful must have been, and indeed must now be, your reflections upon the past three years. Your influence not merely lost, but exerted against Christ. How do you view the sparing mercy and the reclaiming grace of your heavenly Father? It is a wonder he did not leave you for ever. I hope you reflect much upon the aggravated guilt of so long an apostasy.

"You seem now to be decided; continue so, and do not indulge in those doubts and fears to which you are so much inclined."

In reference to her own agency in reclaiming her friend W——, she says:

"You speak of my influence over you. Ah, it was not *mine*. If God has made me an instrument of leading your mind in any measure to thoughts of him and of your duty, *be his the praise*. It ought to make me humble, that he will condescend to use

such a worthless creature to advance his glory. Surely the dealings of God in his providence are wonderful. We may well be astonished, and adore."

I conclude this chapter with a few extracts from letters to friends. These extracts are expressive of her sentiments and feelings, and may assist a stranger in forming an estimate of her character.

"*Sabbath Schools.*—I rejoice to hear such good news from your Sabbath schools. I want much to be with you. If ever we feel our responsibility, it is in a time of revival. I hope your heart may be drawn near to God. Mine partakes, in some measure, of the cold atmosphere about me; but it is no excuse. I am determined to devote my life to the Saviour, and be prepared for any event of providence."

"*A cold Professor.*—A cold, heartless, worldly professor of religion is a melancholy object. Conformity to the fashions of the world, is the secret of indifference to

the cause of Christ. No one is more guilty in this respect than myself; but my pride must be humbled."

"*Confidence in God.*—Of all the truths in the Bible, this seems to me the most delightful, 'The Lord reigneth.' I would not have an event of my life changed; I would not call back a departed friend; nor inquire, 'Lord, why hast thou done thus?'"

"*Confidence in Christ.*—It is our privilege to make the Saviour a confidential friend, and to tell him all our wants and sorrows. It has long been my grief, that I could not approach nearer in faith to Christ."

"*Submission.*—It is a great thing to be willing to submit to all that is necessary to promote our spirituality, and fit us for the kingdom of heaven. The rod which our heavenly Father uses is a rod of love; and if properly regarded, never fails to drive us closer to him. Shall we not welcome it?

"'Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his.'"

"*Secret Prayer.*—It has long been my grief that I had no more of a spirit of prayer. Ten or fifteen minutes have usually been my longest seasons, until a few weeks past. I now find that an hour passes very rapidly, while I am holding converse with God."

"*Activity.*—There is no such thing as an idle Christian; of this I am fully convinced."

"*Bible Class.*—I have an interesting class of nine [in Providence]. An hour and a half is short enough for hearing the lesson. It is an amazing responsibility; how little I feel it! Instructing others in a knowledge of God's truth! I sometimes shrink from the duty, forgetting that God can work by the feeblest means."

CHAPTER V.

Character of Miss Bishop—Last sickness, and death.

The piety of Miss Bishop became much more ardent and elevated during the last three years of her life. While at Philadelphia, she seemed to be hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and longed to be in a situation where she could labor more directly for the salvation of others. When she entered the school at Providence, in 1836, she took a higher stand, and seemed determined to glorify God in all things.

The reason she assigned for the change that then took place in her Christian character and exercises, was the blessing of God upon her efforts to acquire a more correct and thorough knowledge of the *doctrines of the Bible.* As she searched

the Scriptures, truth, in its harmonious proportions, and with all its attractions, opened to her view, and stimulated her with new zeal to live a life of holy obedience. From the happy influence such knowledge had upon her own mind, she felt desirous that others, and especially young ladies, should become well acquainted with the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. She felt persuaded, from her own experience, that it would make them more useful, stable, faithful, and happy Christians.

Of the importance of such knowledge, there can be no doubt. It is no more reasonable to expect correct Christian practice from those who are ignorant of the doctrines of the Bible, than it is to expect that a man will be a skilful commander of a vessel, who is ignorant of the science of navigation. Our Saviour prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the *truth;* but it will of course be through such truth as they understand. No soul can grow in grace, unless it has suitable food. One reason why some Christians live at

such a "poor, dying rate," is, because they depend on the ephemeral influence of exciting exhortation, rather than upon a knowledge of God's word, of their duty, and of the reasons for it.

Miss Bishop possessed great tenderness of conscience. It too often happens that professors of religion manifest a great lack of conscientiousness in little things. They strictly perform the weightier matters of the law, but are altogether too lax and indifferent about little deviations from the path of duty. Their conscience condemns them, if they labor, travel or visit on the Sabbath; but it does not upbraid them for spending an hour or two in worldly conversation, or in reading secular books. There is much needed a tenderness of conscience, that will sting the soul with remorse, whenever it indulges in little sins. The subject of this Memoir took pains to cultivate a tender conscience. She often spoke of the importance of this subject, and was always grieved to discover in her pupils any want of conscience about little things.

She possessed, in no small degree, Christian sympathy. She had a heart to feel for others' wo. The following extract is from a letter written to a cousin, who had been bereaved of a sister:

"Providence, Jan. 23d, 1837.

"My dear Cousin, * * * I keenly feel the wound, and can sympathize with my remaining, chastised and desolate cousin. I can weep and pray for you, dear L——, but I cannot console you. The Comforter, the healer, you no doubt find accessible. It is true that, though every earthly friend may fail, and every source of earthly comfort be dried up, there is a Friend who well deserves the name. Yes, we may rejoice in God, even though fierce billows dash around us, and the floods of sorrow overflow.

"L—— has gone but little before us. A few days of trouble, of sin, and it may be of distress, will bring us, if we are the children of God, to the haven of eternal rest. E. B."

To a young lady, who had long been sick, and who survived Miss B. but a short time, she frequently wrote brief notes, encouraging her to be steadfast unto the end. The following is a specimen of these hasty effusions of her sympathy:

"How are you, my dearest H——? I thought much of you on the Sabbath. I hope you are able to lean upon the arm of your heavenly Father. He does care for you. Think of the Saviour's prayer for his disciples, and of his promise, 'I will not leave you comfortless.' Believe this blest assurance, and let the Saviour be your guide. You are safe in his arms."

Miss B. was a consistent Christian. She was not cold and formal one day, and full of zeal the next. When she commenced teaching in Westfield Academy, she remarked that, having had no regular employment for a few months, her religious feelings were low, and that it must be her first work to humble herself before God, that she might be prepared to do good to

the hearts, as well as to the intellects, of her pupils. She set about the work of preparation, and it was not long before she was ready for labor. From that time to her death, she seemed not to loiter a moment. She watched and prayed that her influence as a Christian might not be destroyed or neutralized by any impropriety of speech or behaviour. She aimed to let her light always shine, so as to convince others of the reality and the excellence of religion.

It is time to leave the various incidents of the life of Miss Bishop, and to hasten to the closing scene.

She was a frail, tender plant. Though she was never severely sick, yet she could not endure any protracted hardship. The activity and strength of her mind were greater than her body could endure. The excitement of teaching, and the interest she felt in the spiritual welfare of her pupils, presented to her mind a constant temptation to tax her physical energies to the utmost. When her friends cautioned

her in regard to her health, she would say, "It is better to wear out, than to rust out." Her friends in Falmouth wished her to remain in their family; but though she loved them tenderly, she conscientiously felt that it was her duty to leave the comforts and enjoyments of home, and engage in teaching, where she could labor for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the young. With these feelings, she left F., and came to Westfield. On her dying bed, she alluded to the circumstances of her being absent from her sister; and in a prayer for her relatives, she besought the Lord, that they might forgive her for choosing the field of labor in which she must soon die, in preference to remaining with them; "Thou knowest, dear Saviour," said she, "that it was for *thee*, for the promotion of thy cause, that I made the sacrifice."

Early in March, 1839, she seemed to have a bad cold, and complained of great prostration of strength. She staid out of the school two or three days, but did not apprehend any thing serious. To a young

lady confined by sickness, who had expressed some fears lest Miss B.'s health should fail, she wrote as follows:

"I am no more concerned about myself than I have been. I feel better in every respect; my medicine has had an astonishing effect. It is not strange you should feel so about me, having suffered so much yourself. I am coming to see you soon."

About this time she wrote a letter to her cousin, L. W., of Farmington, which ended thus:

"If I close teaching in the spring, I intend to journey somewhere. But we know not what a day may bring forth; how useless to plan! or at least to depend upon our plans. *Before that time, our heads may be laid low;* but if prepared, we cannot say, 'Wo be the day.' It is sweet to die trusting in Jesus, and it is sweet to live devoted to his service.

"'My God, I would not wish to see
My fate, with curious eyes,
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise!'"

This was the last letter she ever wrote.

About the first of April, she seemed to be seized with a fever; the violence of the disease subsided in a few days, but she did not recover strength enough to sit up. She, however, regarded herself as convalescent, and doubted not that she should soon be out. In the mean time her friends began to be somewhat alarmed; there was an irritation about the lungs, and other symptoms that indicated speedy dissolution. Still she was calm, and had no suspicion that death was near.

On the 19th of April, I told her that her symptoms were such as alarmed her friends, and though she might possibly recover, still we had our fears. A flush came over her face, and she looked at me with a degree of astonishment. After praying with her, and exhorting her to trust in the Lord, I left. This was to her a painful moment; for about two hours she seemed to be under a cloud. She then requested Mrs. M., the lady with whom she boarded, to read to her the 27th Psalm. She listened attentively, and then said, "*That* Psalm expresses my feelings; my

work is done, and I am now ready to depart."

From that time she appeared to be raised above the world; her eye was fixed on heaven, her heart was there, and she longed for the time to arrive, when she should hear the

> "angels say,
> 'Sister Spirit, come away.'"

On Sabbath eve, the 21st, she was perfectly rational, calm and happy. She conversed much at intervals during the evening. She said, "I feel ready and willing, yes, I long to go. I hope it is not a selfish wish. It is strange I should feel so calm, when death was so unexpected. O, how unworthy am I of a pure and holy heaven."

Her strength gradually diminished, and the peace and joy of her soul gradually increased, until her power of endurance seemed to be almost exhausted. The expressions she now used, in describing her views and feelings, were often so extravagant and imaginative, that it was apparent that reason was but faintly exercised. "O," said she, "how delightful

to get to heaven. 'In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you.' 'Set your house in order, for ye shall *die* and not *live*.' How it would sound, if it read, 'ye shall *live* and not *die*.' Tell sister Phebe she has been a dear sister to me. I should be glad to see her, but it would be of little use, we shall soon meet in heaven."

The impenitent, who came around her bed, she exhorted to make their peace with God without delay. She continued thus to talk of heaven, her much-desired and happy home, and several times united with others in singing a favorite hymn:

> "Ye angels who stand round the throne,
> And view my Immanuel's face," &c.

And when they sang

> "I want to put on my attire," &c.,

her soul seemed to be filled with ecstasy. Friday morning, the 26th, about four o'clock, she became speechless, and soon after sank into a state of insensibility, and at seven o'clock, the silver cord was loosed, the

pitcher was broken at the fountain, and her spirit returned to God who gave it.

Thus lived and died ELIZA BISHOP. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

She was interred on the Sabbath following, in Westfield. At her funeral, I preached from Heb. 11 : 13, "All these died in faith." The concluding paragraph of the sermon is introduced, as a suitable conclusion of the Memoir.

"This event speaks impressively to the young, and especially to those who have been the pupils of the deceased. She, who has felt so deep an interest in your temporal and spiritual welfare, is now dead. Those lips, from which you have received so much instruction, are sealed in silence; that heart from which has ascended to heaven many a fervent prayer, has ceased to beat. She has finished her work, and gone to her long-desired home.

"If she had not sought the Lord in the days of her youth, she would have died in her sins. It is plain, that had she

delayed a preparation for heaven till the the meridian of life, her soul would have been lost. Will you, then, neglect the great salvation, when God is admonishing you, that in very many cases, *youth is the only time to seek the Lord.* 'At such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.'"

Her grave-stone bears the following chaste and appropriate inscription:

ELIZA BISHOP,

BORN AT FARMINGTON, CONN.

DECEMBER 9, 1813.

THE LAST
FIVE YEARS
OF HER LIFE WERE
SUCCESSFULLY DEVOTED
TO THE INTERESTS OF
FEMALE EDUCATION AND PIETY;
AND, AMIDST A WIDE AND
EXTENDING SPHERE OF
USEFULNESS, DIED
WHILE PRECEPT-
RESS OF
WESTFIELD ACADEMY,

APRIL 26, 1839.